AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-13 (Canceled)

14. (Currently amended) A method for the treatment of an inflammatory disease characterized by elevated expression of interleukin 17 (IL-17), comprising administering to a mammalian subject, having been determined to express an elevated level of IL-17 compared to a healthy individual, an effective amount of an anti-interleukin-23 (anti-IL-23) antibody or an anti-interleukin-23 receptor (anti-IL-23 receptor) antibody.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein said mammalian subject is human.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said inflammatory disease is selected from rheumatoid arthritis (RA), multiple sclerosis (MS), asthma, systemic lupus erythrematosus, Behcet's disease, and psoriasis.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein said ~~chronic~~ inflammatory disease is selected from the group consisting of rheumatoid arthritis (RA), multiple sclerosis (MS), and psoriasis.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said antagonist is an anti-IL-23 antibody.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said antibody is an antibody fragment.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said antibody fragment is selected from the group consisting of Fv, Fab, Fab', and $F(ab')_2$.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said antibody is a full-length antibody.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said antibody is chimeric.

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said antibody is humanized.

25. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said antibody is human.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said antibody is administered in combination with an additional therapeutic agent.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein said additional therapeutic agent is an anti-inflammatory molecule.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein said anti-inflammatory molecule is selected from the group consisting of corticosteroids and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

29-49 (Canceled)

50. (New) A method for the treatment of an inflammatory disease characterized by elevated expression of interleukin 17 (IL-17), comprising administering to a mammalian subject in need of said treatment an effective amount of an anti-interleukin-23 (anti-IL-23) antibody or an anti-interleukin-23 receptor (anti-IL-23 receptor) antibody.

51. (New) The method of claim 50 wherein said mammalian subject is human.

52. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said inflammatory disease is selected from rheumatoid arthritis (RA), multiple sclerosis (MS), asthma, systemic lupus erythrematosus, Behcet's disease, and psoriasis.

53. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein said inflammatory disease is selected from the group consisting of rheumatoid arthritis (RA), multiple sclerosis (MS), and psoriasis.

54. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said antagonist is an anti-IL-23 antibody.

55. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said antibody is an antibody fragment.

56. (New) The method of claim 55 wherein said antibody fragment is selected from the group consisting of Fv, Fab, Fab', and $F(ab')_2$.

57. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said antibody is a full-length antibody.

58. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said antibody is chimeric.

59. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said antibody is humanized.

60. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said antibody is human.

61. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said antibody is administered in combination with an additional therapeutic agent.

62. (New) The method of claim 61 wherein said additional therapeutic agent is an anti-inflammatory molecule.

63. (New) The method of claim 62 wherein said anti-inflammatory molecule is selected from the group consisting of corticosteroids and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).